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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, thank You for today—fresh with sparkling dew and bright with the splendor of the morning Sun. We accept this day as a gift from Your bounty and will use it for the glory of Your Name. As our Senators strive to do what is best for this great land, lead them with Your might. Guide them by Your higher wisdom and make them know the constancy of Your presence. Lord, give them the greatness of being on Your side and the delight of knowing they are doing Your will. Keep their hearts and minds riveted on You, as they seek to be responsive to Your leading. Make them stewards of the blessings You have given them.

We pray in the Redeemer's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL of New Mexico led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 20, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, first, I ask unanimous consent that today, May 20, I be authorized to sign any duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. There will be up to 2 hours for debate in relation to the Inouye amendment. That is the Inouye-Inhofe amendment. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes, the majority will control the next 30 minutes, and the final hour will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. Senator INOUE will control the final 5 minutes prior to the vote. Upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate will proceed to vote on the amendment. Senators should expect the first vote of the day to begin around 11:30 to a quarter of 12.

Yesterday, I filed cloture on this legislation. Under rule XXII, germane first-degree amendments must be filed by 1 p.m. today.

If we are able to reach an agreement, we will also consider the conference report to accompany S. 454, the procurement legislation, during the day.

WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I made a decision at the beginning of this Congress to go back to the way the Senate used to be, or at least the way I saw the Senate. I believed if we moved away from the past practices of the last 15 years of limiting the offering of amendments, for example, having more debate, not less, that a new spirit would develop in this historic body we call the Senate.

I believe that spirit has come—come slowly—but with the trust of the Republicans growing with the majority, amendments have come with the idea of improving or changing legislation, not the “I gotcha” politics, tactics of the past used by both Democrats and Republicans. The result has been legislation being passed of which we can all take credit:

The lands bill; Ledbetter, equal pay for men and women; the Children's Health Insurance Program, 14 million kids with health insurance; the economic recovery package, which is being felt now around the country; the omnibus spending bill, which was long overdue; national service legislation, allowing 750,000 men and women to become involved in public service, getting paid a little bit for that but help for their college education.

We did some things that needed to be done with the budget, reducing the deficit in 5 years by as much as two-thirds. We passed housing legislation, which will bolster the ability of regulators to do a good job of watching what goes on with housing, including

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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